

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5995

UNCLAS PRAGUE 0668

FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT ACTION TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA 031054Z
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO
FOR ECON/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OGEN, AU EAGR
SUBJECT: OPRED- PROPOSED TRANSFER OF AGATT POSITION FROM
THE HAGUE TO VIENNA
REF: STATE 063151

1. AS PROMISED, FOLLOWING ARE OUR COMMENTS ON REFTEL
FOR INCLUSION IN YOUR REPLY.
2. WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO IMPROVE OUR COVERAGE OF
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND U.S.
AGRICULTURAL TRADE PROMOTION HERE. REGIONAL ATTACHE BASED
IN VIENNA COULD PROVIDE NEEDED EXPERTISE AS REGARDS FORMER,
BUT SOME OTHER FACTORS SHOULD BE NOTED.
3. FROM PAST EXPERIENCE IT IS CLEAR THAT CZECHS WOULD
PREFER OFFICER ACCREDITED TO PRAGUE TO BE RESIDENT IN CAPITAL OF
ANOTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRY RATHER THAN VIENNA. NON-
ACCREDITED ATTACHE, WHEREVER RESIDENT, WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY
ENCOUNTER VISA PROBLEMS AND HAVE LITTLE OR NO CHANCE TO
SEE OFFICIALS.
4. WHETHER OR NOT NON-RESIDENT ATTACHE WERE
ACCREDITED TO PRAGUE, HE COULD NOT, OF COURSE, MAINTAIN DAY-TO-
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DAY CONTACTS NECESSARY TO DO BUSINESS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND

THEREFORE HE WOULD BE LIMITED IN ABILITY TO SERVICE UNITED STATES TRADE INTERESTS. AT PRESENT TIME, AGRICULTURAL REPORTING AND TRADE PROMOTION RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRAGUE ARE HANDLED BY EMBASSY ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICERS; ONE OFFICER DEVOTES CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF HIS TIME TO SERVING AS EMBASSY "AGRICULTURAL OFFICER." IN PAST YEAR EMBASSY PRAGUE HAS ARRANGED APPOINTMENTS FOR SEVERAL TRADE MISSIONS WHICH HAVE INCLUDED BOTH FAS-COOPERATOR GROUPS AND INDEPENDENT MISSIONS, BUT NOT ONLY IN FIELD OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS-- E.G. LAST DECEMBER'S AGRICULTURAL AND IRRIGATION EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION. AS EMBASSY PRAGUE HAS RECENTLY STRESSED TO FAS, WE ARE PARTICULARLY INTENT IN SETTING UP COORDINATED PROGRAM RELATING (THROUGH AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION) TO OUR CONSIDERABLE SOYBEAN SALES HERE, TO AGRICULTURAL EQUIPMENT SALES, AND TO ANIMAL SALES AS WELL. WHILE REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE BASED IN VIENNA MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE SOME ASSISTANCE IN THIS REGARD, TRADE-PROMOTION FUNCTION WILL INEVITABLY REMAIN WITH EMBASSY PRAGUE.

5. WE ASSUME REGIONAL ATTACHE WOULD MAKE PERIODIC FIELD TRIPS HERE AND WHICH WOULD SUBSTITUTE FOR OCCASIONAL PAST VISITS BY USDA OFFICIALS FROM WASHINGTON. THESE PAST VISITS HAVE BEEN USEFUL BOTH TO EMBASSY IN PURSUIT OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AND TO USDA IN ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE OF LOCAL CONDITIONS. WE BELIEVE THAT IF REGIONAL ATTACHE POSITION IS ESTABLISHED, SUCH VISITS COULD USEFULLY BE EXPANDED TO PERHAPS 3-4 PER YEAR. WE CANNOT BE SURE, HOWEVER, WHETHER VISITING "REGIONAL ATTACHE" WOULD BE RECEIVED BY CZECHOSLOVAK OFFICIALS AS CORDIALLY AS THEY HAVE RECEIVED OFFICIALS VISITING FROM WASHINGTON. IN FACT, AS FAR AS CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS CONCERNED AN ALTERNATIVE TO ASSIGNING OFFICER TO VIENNA WOULD BE TO STEP UP VISITS FROM WASHINGTON; EVEN 3-4 SUCH VISITS YEARLY WOULD PRESUMABLY COST LESS THAN STATIONING MAN IN VIENNA.

WORTZEL

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